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THE GULL
MONTHLY BULLETIN

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY INC.

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FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET A GREAT SUCCESS

For succeeding generations of Audubon Society members and for those who were unable to attend our Fortieth Anniversary Banquet on January 10 at the Hotel Claremont, Berkeley, we feel we should give our readers a brief account of the evening. More than three hundred people came, each eager to participate in celebrating the milestone of the fortieth birthday of an organization dedicated to public service, to the ideal of conservation, and to the enjoyment of the natural world. A warm glow of pleasure pervaded the entire Salem Room throughout the evening. In such an atmosphere, no one could help having a good time and the party was quite naturally a great success.

After a delicious dinner, which had been planned and arranged by Mrs. Arthur H. Myer and her committee, President Mrs. George C. Browne spoke a few words of welcome and introduced Dr. Harold C. Bryant, first honorary president of the Audubon Association of the Pacific (1917), who presented our honored guests. Invitations had been sent to twelve forty-year members, the men and women who were among the thirty-eight first members in 1917. Of these, seven were present: Mr. C. B. Lastreto, Mrs. Morton R. Gibbons, Mrs. Edwin D. Woodruff, Mr. and Mrs. Charles N. Douglas, Mr. Joseph S. Hunter, and Dr. Tracy I. Storer. Regrets had been received from Miss Eva F. Griffin, Miss Amy E. Gunn, Mrs. Augustus S. Kibbe, Miss Ouida Kinross, and Mr. Carl R. Smith.

It was thought appropriate on this occasion to review the early history of our society, which was admirably done by Mrs. Albert B. Stephens of San Francisco, a member since 1927. Mrs. Stephens impressed us wth the importance of the Audubon Society in the community of the Bay Area from the time of its beginning, not only in the pleasures of bird-watching and identification, but in the protection of wildlife. Dr. T. Eric Reynolds of Oakland then spoke of our present and our future as the Golden Gate Audubon Society, an outgrowth of the Audubon Association of the Pacific, and a branch of the National Audubon Society. In response to many requests, Dr. Reynolds' address is included in this issue of "The Gull."

Reverting to "the good old days," a group of mysterious characters beat the birds to the bush in taking a census of the rare avifauna that we are supposed to believe was extant in the Bay Area at the time. We were impressed by the enormous size and peculiar appearance of the Ladder-backed Woodpecker, the American Golden-eye, the Belted Kingfisher, the Cowbird, the Olive-sided Flycatcher, a rare Hummingbird, and a Mystery Bird whose eggs sounded strangely like balloons when sat upon. We too longed for the past when such sights were common in this vicinity!

After the curtain fell on this episode, our guest speaker, Dr. George Miksch Sutton, Professor of Zoology at the University of Oklahoma, charmed everyone with his stories of "Bird Hunting with the Eskimos" and a naturalist's winter on Southampton Island. Dr. Sutton proved his reputation as one of the most versatile and most literate of the world's biologists. No one in the audience will ever forget the vivid verbal image of his story, a beetle that became the eye of a ptarmigan in the arctic snow! We are most fortunate that we can continue to enjoy Dr. Sutton's stories through his delightfully entertaining books, "Eskimo Year," "Birds of the Wilderness," and "Mexican Birds," all of which are illustrated by his excellent paintings and drawings.

The evening closed happily and appropriately with a few words from our retiring president, Mrs. Browne, and the introduction of our president for 1957, Mr. Paul Covel. Thanks are due so many for so much — to all our members and friends who contributed their time and work. Most of these will remain anonymous, but we will mention our appreciation of the original drawing of gulls in flight designed for the printed program by Ariel Parkinson, California artist, and our special thanks must go also to the out-of-town friends of the Golden Gate Audubon Society who came from a distance to attend our Fortieth Anniversary celebration.

PROGRESS AND PRESSURE

Address given by DR. T. ERIC REYNOLDS on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary Banquet of the Golden Gate Audubon Society, January 10, 1957.

When the present Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded in 1917 the population of the entire state of California was about one-half of the present population of the City of Los Angeles. It was less than the increase that has taken place since the 1950 census. It was only a little over three million, and it is estimated that by 1965 the population may be in excess of twenty million.

So today we are confronted by a different set of facts. Not only do we have more people, but patterns of transportation and land and water usage have markedly altered. It has been said that at the present time more land is covered by concrete than still remains in its wilderness state. Only a few of the rivers of the southwest quarter of the United States now reach the sea (except, perhaps, during flood periods). Small farms are giving place to vast acreages, where swales and swamps are being filled, stream-beds are being straightened, and level fields can be tilled or mowed several times yearly. Near the sea, salt marshes, estuaries, and tide flats are being filled (often with garbage disposal as the first stage), to be used for industry and housing. Along with this, there is the commercial exploitation of our natural resouces, the minerals, the forests, and the fisheries. There is also the massive spraying from aircraft to control insects and plant life, as well as industrial and organic stream pollution. What is happening here is happening throughout the world — in the tropics, and even on the tundra. All too often these projects heedlessly ignore the first principles of conservation practice.

Most of this is inevitable. In a world of man, man's interest must be served. Such is the price of progress. But man must ask himself the value of the peace of mind that comes from watching the sun set over a mountain meadow, or the flash of curlew's wings over a morning marsh. He must determine if along with the public debt for war and welfare he should bequeath to his posterity some of these priceless assets, a virgin forest, a wet meadow, and a sparkling salt marsh.

It is in the implementation of this ideal that the various conservation organiziations can serve the present and the future. It is not enough for us individuals to enjoy the delights of the natural world to ourselves. We have an obligation as well as a privilege. There is no room for bigotry and senseless bickering between groups of people dedicated to the same ideals, whoever and wherever they might be. This concept is bigger than any and all personalities.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, now proudly a branch of the National Audubon Society, has grown (though not apace with the growth of the general population), and it has come a long way, but it has far to go. The Society can number among its

achievements nature education, through junior clubs, field trips, summer camps, Screen Tours, and children's contests. The Society has, along with other groups, a toe-hold on a salt marsh sanctuary, and it has a Sanctuary and Memorial Fund with a board of trustees to receive, guard, and expend money directed to it in gifts and bequests of any size.

The future, while not exactly rose-colored, is far from hopeless. To a great extent, the dedication, zeal, energy, and unselfishness of those now living will determine the heritage we leave to our descendants. Scientific studies, especially where they affect man's economic life, will undoubtedly prosper and increase. Animals which provide sport for man will make out. It is the purely esthetic and cultural values of the natural world that are most sorely threatened, and that can be seriously diminished and even lost due to the apathy and lack of vision of living man. This is the day of pressure groups, and most of the interests, worthy and unworthy, that threaten the natural beauty and the wildlife of the world are represented by vigorous and powerful lobbies. It is essential that the idea of preserving a reasonable remnant of our heritage must have one too. We need many organizations, large and small, working together to make our impact felt on local and national legislation. Wilderness areas, parks, sanctuaries, and natural landmarks have to be guarded as well as acquired. The future is up to us. We must defend those things we hold to be important.

JANUARY TRIP TO LOS BANOS

About 20 members and guests gathered at 9:30 a.m. in Los Banos, Merced County, on January 13, despite intermittent rain earlier in the morning, and proceeded to the Los Banos State Waterfowl Management Area, a few miles N.E. of the town. Several late-comers caught up with the group here or as we drove in a caravan of six well-filled cars on the somewhat gravelled, "main" levee roads of the area — the only ones passable because of the recent rain. With the hunting season past, and with the rain as an additional stimulus, many of the ducks and geese had dispersed from this area which had been closed to hunting and were now spread out an adjacent farmland. However, in the east and north parts of the "refuge" we found a number of large flocks, including a few Ross' Geese (identifiable only through telescope) among a large flock of Snow Geese on Buttonwillow Lake. A few Sandhill Cranes were seen here also, but a much larger flock was found in the afternoon on farmland some 5 miles to the east. Most exciting for many of those present were the excellent views obtained of both the Virginia and the Sora Rails, feeding on patches of mud by tall marsh vegetation in Mud Slough.

After lunching in the rain and returning to headquarters, a reduced party drove to the Dos Palos Y and thence north to and west on Athlone-Sandy Mush Road (7 miles) to the Merced National Wildlife Management Area for a brief late afternoon visit to this southernmost unit of the Federal Government's system of refuges in the Central Valley. The number of birds seen on the ground here was disappontingly low, the areas with water being scarcely accessible because of slick roads; but many flights passed overhead enroute to feeding grounds as we left. Post-hunting season dispersal had taken all the white geese from the areas we could reach even with the help of the government four-wheel drive truck. Hence we saw none of the Ross' Geese which were present here up to a few days before our trip, this being the area of greatest midwinter concentration of that species according to David Marshall, U. S. biologist investigating its population.

In the following list of the 82 species of birds found in the two areas the first number (or the one if only one is used) indicates the number of individuals of that species counted or estimated at the Los Banos Area (including to farm areas in vicinity), while the second number indicates those seen at the Merced Area or vicinty: Pied-billed Grebe 18; White Pelican 1; Double-crested Cormorant 10; Great Blue Heron 12, 2; Am. Egret 8, several; Snowy Egret 3; Black-crowned Night Heron 15; Am. Bittern 7; Whistling Swan 10; Canada Goose 60 (including all three subspecies), 50 (Cackling); White-fronted Goose 300, 50; Snow Goose 400; Ross' Goose 3; Mallard, hundreds at each

place; Gadwall 6; Pintail 1000, 2000; Green-winged Teal 600, 200; Shoveller 800, 500; Am. Widgeon 200, 300; Canvas-back 1; Bufflehead 3; Ruddy Duck 15, several; Red-tailed Hawk 4, 6; Red-shouldered Hawk 1; Marsh Hawk, 25, 20; large Falcon, sp.?, 1 (enroute, near San Joaquin River); Sparrow Hawk 6, 3; Ring-necked Pheasant 15, 40; Sandhill Crane 270, several heard; Virginia Rail 1; Sora Rail 3; (Florida) Black Gallinule 2; Am. Coot 1500, 1000+; Killdeer 30, 40; Wilson's Snipe 2; Long-billed Curlew 1, 28; Greater Yellow-legs 12, 10; Least Sandpiper 40; Red-backed Sandpiper 150; Dowitcher sp.? (presumably Long-billed at this inland locality) 40; Western Sandpiper 30; Am. Avocet 4; California Gull 30; Ring-billed Gull 15, 20; Mourning Dove, several, 20; Burrowing Owl —, 1; Red-shafted Flicker 5, 3; Nuttall's Woodpecker 1; Black Phoebe 3, 1; Say's Phoebe 1, 1; Horned Lark, flock of several hundred near Dos Palos Y; Tree (?) Swallow 6; Scrub Jay 1; Yellow-billed Magpie, many near towns of Gustine and Los Banos; Am. Crow, 5; Marsh Wren 10; Mockingbird 6, 1; Hermit Thrush 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet —, 1; Water Pipit 30; Loggerhead Shrike 6, 4 (and many enroute); Com. Starling 25; Myrtle Warbler 1; Audubon's Warbler 15, 8; Yellow-throat 1; House Sparrow; W. Meadlowlark, 40, 200; Red-winged Blackbird 1000+, hundreds; Tri-colored Blackbird; Brewer's Blackbird; Brown-headed Cowbird 1 (heard singing, Los Banos headquarters — Chas. Hines); House Finch; Pine Siskin 40; Am. Goldfinch 2; Brown Towhee 1; Savannah Sparrow 30; Lark Sparrow, several (enroute, near Dos Palos Y); Oregon Junco 2; White-crowned Sparrow, hundreds, both areas; Golden-crowned Sparrow 1; Lincoln's Sparrow 1; Song Sparrow. Other species seen by those who came via route 33 from Tracy were: White-tailed Kite, Ferruginous Hawk, and Pigeon Hawk.

— HOWARD L. COGSWELL, *Leader and Historian.*

JANUARY TRIP TO BERKELEY AQUATIC PARK AND BAY SHORE

On Saturday, January 26, a favorite local birding habitat, Berkeley's Aquatic Park and environs, was explored by 26 members and friends. Leader Arthur Myer discounted the freezing weather by commenting that one could hardly expect a clearer day. A shivering malcontent whispered "or a colder one!" Once the group began investigating the park, they found the rising sun perfectly geared for easy observing. Many interesting species remained on the water as we appreached and allowed rather close views. A raft of Bonaparte's Gulls rested lightly on the water while two Avocets busily hunted in their distinctive fashion. Among the shorebirds refusing to fly at our sudden approach were a Greater Yellow-legs, a Sanderling, 6 Killdeer, and a Black-bellied Plover. The trip continued as we preceeded to survey the bay and shore at Albany as the tide began to ebb. Large rafts of sleeping Ruddies were sighted offshore. We then ended a most enjoyable trip at the Berkeley Yacht Harbor with a walk out on the old ferry pier, now occupied by fishermen. Thirty-four species were observed: Horned Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant; Great Blue Heron; Am. Egret, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Pintail, Shoveller, Am. Widgeon, Canvas-back, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Am. Golden-eye, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, Hooded Merganser [not normal at such salt-water localities — Ed.], Red-breasted Merganser, Sparrow Hawk, Am. Coot, Killdeer, Black-bellied Plover, Willet, Greater Yellow-legs, Least Sandpiper, Sanderling, Am. Avocet, Glaucous-winged Gull, Western Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Forster's Tern.

— BRIAN DALY, *Historian.*

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following members to our society: from Inola, Miss Margaret Zube; from Oakland, Mrs. C. Earle Clement, Mr. G. Gray, and Dr. George E. Gifford, Jr.; from San Francisco, Miss Jessie Saunders, Miss Louise Abbott, and Mrs. S. B. Buckner; from Sausalito, Mrs. Elizabeth Lennon.

— JEAN L. DUNHAM, M.D., *Membership Chairman.*

NEWS OF IMPORTANT COMING EVENTS

The Biennial *Pacific Coast Convention of the National Audubon Society and its Branches and Affiliates,* to be held at the Asilomar Conference Grounds in Pacific Grove on April 13 through April 16, will feature a new approach to the fields of nature and conservation which looks mighty interesting. Concentrating upon "Sea and Shore" as a theme, topflight marine biologists and oceanographers, authors, teachers, and conservation specialists and administrators will combine to present a vivid and factual picture of the great variety of life that is a part of the sea or dependent upon it along the shore, as well as the conservation values and problems connected with this most intriguing habitat. Field trips to the wonderful tide-pools of the Monterey Peninsula shore, to unique Point Lobos, and to other shore habitats or nearby inland areas, or by boat on the open ocean itself, are included and will enable participants to see first hand many of the things that figure in the sea-dependent life of the region.

Branch members will have received the full announcement already. If you didn't, *write now* to the Pacific Coast Office of the National Audubon Society, 2426 Bancroft Way, Berkeley 4, California, for the folder with complete program and registration blank. Then don't fail to take advantage of the fine opportunity thereby provided to become a greater sea and shore enthusiast than you are.

The *annual meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Society* will be held in Los Angeles, April 25 through 27, with sessions for the presentation of papers on April 26 at the Los Angeles County Museum and on the 27th at UCLA. Sunday the 28th will be given over to a field trip to the California Condor country (presumably on the one access road that is open in the area otherwise closed to protect the nesting and roosting grounds from molestation). Headquarters for the meetings are at the Hotel Statler.

The enclosed announcement and *questionnare concerning travel and expenditures involved in pursuit of the hobby of bird study* is a new and worthwhile survey in which Dr. Fred G. Evenden of the Sacramento Audubon Society is engaged. If enough people cooperate by sending him the questionnare completely filled out at the end of the year (1957), an imposing set of figures regarding the value of birders as customers of various businesses can be arrived at. Address all inquiries concerning the project to Dr. Evenden.

MARCH MEETING

The 474th regular meeting of the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 14, in the auditorium of the Rotary Natural Science Center, near the bird-feeding area at Lake Merritt (Lakeside Park), Oakland. From San Francisco take Key System line B to Grand Avenue at Perkins Street. Walk one block down Perkins to the Center. Mr. Howard L. Cogswell will speak on the topic, "How Many Birds are there in California? — How Their Numbers can be Known." The talk will be illustrated with slides, charts, and blackboard.

— BONNIE SMITH, *Program Chairman.*

There will be a no-host dinner preceding the meeting, at 6:00 p.m., at the Lakeside Inn just across the bird-feeding area from the Natural Science Center in the park.

— ETHEL L. MYER, *Social Chairman.*

FIELD TRIPS FOR MARCH

On Sunday, March 10, to MOSS LANDING. Beach, ocean, lagoon, pond, marsh and field are the varied habitat in a package offered on this trip. Take U.S. 101 south of San Jose to the Monterey Peninsula Cut-off (Route 156) 9 miles north of Salinas. Turn west to Castroville, then north (right) on route 1 for three miles. Meet at 10:00 a.m. near the stone bridge over Elkhorn Slough. Leader, Carlyle Sather, 7880 Mission Street, Colma, California, — PL 6-0581.

On Saturday, March 23rd, to TILDEN PARK. Some summer residents may be expected along with transients and wintering species in this "close to home" area. Bring lunch, friends and cameras for a welcome to spring. Leader, A. Laurence Curl, 751 Balra Drive, El Cerrito, LA 6-7004.

APRIL BOAT TRIP

Sunday, April 7th, to the FARALLON ISLANDS on the new, faster, bigger Privateer II. This trip was planned for an earlier date than usual, as there is much to be learned about conditions off shore at various times of the year. Departure will be from Berkeley Harbor at 5:30 a.m., with a later pick-up of passengers in San Francisco. Complete information as to time, clothing, etc., will be sent to all who reserve a space. Fee per person is $ 8.00. This should be sent to the Field Trips Chairman — Lee Stallcup, 6227 Buenaventura Ave., Oakland 5, California — with your name, address, and phone number. Names will be placed on the passenger list in the order received. Maximum number of passengers — 47. Leader, Harold Peterson, LO 8-7534.

— LEE STALLCUP, *Field Trips Chairman.*

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Established January 25, 1917

A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Claims for missing numbers of THE GULL should be sent to the Distribution Chairman. Changes of address should be sent to the Membership Chairman.

Monthly meetings second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint Membership, Local and National, $5.00 per year, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subscription to THE GULL separately, $1.00 per year.

Visit the Pacific Coast Office of the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY — 2426 Bancroft Way Berkeley 4, California — TH 8-4042